9.1a About our Early Years Education and childcare

Welcome to Acorn Pre-School & The Mighty Oaks and thank you for registering your child with us.

We know how important your child is and aim to deliver the highest quality of care and education to help them to achieve the best learning and development opportunities possible.

This document aims to provide you with an introduction to Acorn Pre-School & The Mighty Oaks, our routines, our approach to supporting your child's learning and development and how we aim to work together with you to best meet your child's individual needs. This should be read alongside our Childcare Terms and Conditions for a full description of our services.

Our setting aims to:

- Safeguard all children in our care
- provide high quality care and education for children
- work in partnership with parents to help children to learn and develop
- add to the life and well-being of the local community
- offer children and their parents/carers a service that promotes equality and values diversity

Parents & Working in Partnership You are regarded as members of our setting who have full participatory rights. These include a right to be:

- valued and respected
- kept informed
- consulted
- involved
- included at all levels

Children's development and learning We aim to ensure that each child:

- is in a safe and stimulating environment
- Has a named key person who makes sure each child makes the anticipated progress and is your link to our setting
- is given generous care and attention, because of our ratio of qualified staff to children, as well as any volunteer helpers
- has the chance to join in with other children and adults to live, play, work and learn together
- is helped to take forward her/his learning and development by being helped to build on what she/he already knows and can do
- has 2 key people who make sure each child makes progress in the curriculum
- is in a setting that sees parents as partners in helping each child to learn and develop
- is in a setting in which parents help to shape the service it offers

The Early Years Foundation Stage Provision for the development and learning of children from birth to five years is guided by the Early Years Foundation Stage. Our provision reflects the four overarching principles of the *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage* :

- *A Unique Child*
  Every child is a unique child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- *Positive Relationships*
  Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
- *Enabling Environments*

Children learn and develop well in enabling environments with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners, parents and/or carers.

- *Learning and Development*
- Children develop and learn at different rates. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

How we provide for learning and development Children start to learn about the world around them from the moment they are born. The care and education offered by our setting helps children to continue to do this by providing all the children with interesting activities that are appropriate for their age and stage of development.

The Areas of Learning and Development comprise:

- *Prime Areas*
  - Personal, social and emotional development.
  - Physical development.
  - Communication and language.
- *Specific Areas*
  - Literacy.
  - Mathematics.
  - Understanding the world.
  - Expressive arts and design.

For each area, the level of progress that children are expected to have attained by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage is defined by the Early Learning Goals. These goals state what it is expected that children will know, and be able to do, by the end of the reception year of their education.

We refer to non-statutory curriculum guidance to support our professional judgment as we assess each child's progress and level of development as they progress towards the Early Learning Goals. We have regard to these when we assess children and plan for their learning by creating a curriculum that is ambitious and meets the needs of every child. Our educational programmes support children to develop the knowledge, skills and understanding they need for:

Personal, social and emotional development

- self-regulation
- managing self
- building relationships

Physical development

- gross motor skills
- fine motor skills

Communication and language

- listening, attention and understanding
- speaking

Literacy

- comprehension
- word reading
- writing

Mathematics

- number
- numerical patterns

Understanding the world

- past and present

- people, culture and communities
- the natural world

Expressive arts and design

- creating with materials
- being imaginative and expressive

Our Curriculum Our Curriculum is ambitious and designed to cover all areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), as well as providing our children with the steeping stones to build a lifelong love of learning, giving them the roots to grown and wings to fly.

Our approach to learning and development and assessment

Learning through play

Being active and playing supports young children's learning and development through doing and talking. This is how children learn to think about and understand the world around them. We use the EYFS statutory education programmes to plan and provide opportunities which will help children to make progress in all areas of learning. This programme is made up of a mixture of activities that children led and organise for themselves, and activities planned and led by Early Years Educators.

Characteristics of effective learning

We understand that all children engage with other people and their environment through the characteristics of effective learning that are described in the Early Years Foundation Stage as:

- playing and exploring – engagement and enjoyment
- active learning – motivation and participation
- creating and thinking critically – thinking and problem solving

We aim to provide for the characteristics of effective learning by observing how a child engages with learning and being clear about what we can do and provide to support each child to remain an effective and motivated learner.

Assessment

We assess how young children are learning and developing by observing them. We use information that we gain from observations of the children, to understand their progress and where this may be leading them. We believe that parents know their children best and we will ask you to contribute to assessment by sharing information about what your child likes to do at home and how you, as parents, are supporting development.

We make periodic assessment summaries of children's achievement based on our on-going observations. These help us to build a picture of a child's progress during their time with us and form part of children's records of achievement/learning journeys. We undertake these assessment summaries at regular intervals, as well as at times of transition, such as when a child moves onto a different setting or when they start school.

The progress check at age two

The Early Years Foundation Stage requires that we supply parents and carers with a short-written summary of their child's development in the three prime areas of learning and development - personal, social and emotional development; physical development; and communication and language - when a child is aged between 24 - 36 months. Your child's key persons are responsible for completing the check using information from on-going observations carried out as part of our everyday practice, taking account of the views and contributions of parents and other professionals.

Records of achievement/learning journeys We keep a record of achievement/learning journey for each child. Your child's record of achievement/learning journey helps us to celebrate together her/his achievements and to work together to provide what your child needs for her/his well-being and to make progress.

Your child's key person will work in partnership with you to keep this record. To do this you and she/he will collect information about your child's needs, activities, interests and achievements. This information will

enable the key person to identify your child's progress. Together, we will then decide on how to further support your child's learning and development.

Working together for your children We maintain the ratio of adults to children in the setting that is set by the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements. This helps us to:

- give time and attention to each child
- talk with the children about their interests, activities and reflect on our learning
- help children to experience and benefit from activities provided, challenging and encouraging them to achieve
- allowing children to explore, be adventurous and take calculated risks in a safe environment.

The staff who work at our setting are:

Name	Job Title	Qualifications/ Additional Roles
Lyndsey Black	Manager Designated Safeguarding Lead	Level 5 First Aid Mental Health first Aid
Maureen James	Deputy Manager, SEN Co-ordinator,	Level 3 SENDCo First Aid
Chloe	Session Leader Early Years Educator Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Level 4 Wellbeing Champion Firs Aid Mental Health First Aid
Natalie	Session Leader, Early Years Educator,	Level 4, Health & Safety Co-ordinator Communications Champion First Aid
Harleigh	Early Years Educator,	Level 4 Lift off to Language Lead First Aid
Hayley	Early Years Educator, Looked After Child Co-ordinator, Physical Activity and Nutrition Co-ordinator	Level 4 Assistant SENDCo First Aid Mental Health First Aid
Jamie-Lee	Early Years Educator, Oral Health Co-ordinator	Level 3 Oral Health Co-ordinator First Aid
Sobia	Midday supervisor and Pre-School Assistant	First Aid
Nicole	Midday supervisor and Pre-School Assistant	First Aid
Becki	Midday supervisor and Pre-School Assistant	First Aid
Tilly	Pre-School and Wrap Around Care Assistant	First Aid
Jacqui	Business Manager	Ofsted Nominated Individual, First Aid, Data Manager, Chair of Trustees

We are open for 39 weeks each year – Early years funding is 38 weeks per year.
We are open for 5 days each week – Monday to Friday
The times we are open are 7:45am – 6pm
We provide care and education for young children between the ages of: 2 and 12 years

How parents take part in the setting Our setting recognises parents as the first and most important educators of their children. All our staff see themselves as partners with parents in providing care and education for their children. There are many ways in which parents take part in making our setting a welcoming and stimulating place for children and parents, such as:

- exchanging knowledge about their children's needs, activities, interests and progress with our staff
- contributing to the progress check at age two
- helping at sessions of the setting (When restrictions permit this)
- sharing their own special interests with the children
- helping to provide and look after the equipment and materials used in the children's play activities
- being part of the management of the setting, where appropriate
- taking part in events and informal discussions about the activities and curriculum provided by the setting
- joining in community activities, in which the setting takes part
- building friendships with other parents in the setting
- helping to fundraise to enhance our provision and opportunities for the children

Key persons and your child Our setting uses a key person's approach. Operating a keyworker buddy system means all our educators are jointly responsible for a group of children for whom they are particularly responsible. Your child's key person will be the person who works with you to make sure that the childcare that we provide is right for your child's particular needs and interests. When your child first starts at the setting, they will help your child to settle and throughout your child's time at the setting, they will help your child to benefit from our activities and educational programs.

Learning opportunities for adults As well as gaining childcare qualifications, our staff take part in further training to help them to keep up-to date with thinking about early years care and education. We also keep up to date with best practice, as a member of the Early Years Alliance, through *Under 5* magazine and other publications produced by the Alliance.

The setting's timetable and routines Our setting believes that care and education are equally important in the experience which we offer children. The routines and activities that make up the day in our setting are provided in ways that:

- help each child to feel that they are a valued member of the setting
- ensure the safety of each child
- help children to gain from the social experience of being part of a group
- provide children with opportunities to learn and help them to value learning
- adhere to the rules and values promoted by us
- increasing wellbeing

The sessions We organise our sessions so that the children can choose from, and work at, a range of activities and, in doing so, build up their ability to select and work through a task to its completion. The children are also helped and encouraged to take part in adult-led small and large group activities, which introduce them to new experiences and help them to gain new skills, as well as helping them to learn to work with others increasing their confidence amongst their peers. Outdoor activities contribute to all areas of learning and development, including their health, physical development and understanding the world around them. The children have the opportunity, and are encouraged, to take part in outdoor child-led and adult-led activities, as well as those provided in the indoor space.

We cater for children's individual needs and their style of learning. We have facilities for nap times and quiet areas for some down time.

Snacks and meals We make snacks and meals a social time at which children eat together. We plan the menus for snacks so that they provide the children with healthy and nutritious food. Please tell us about your child's dietary needs, particularly any known allergies or food intolerance and we will plan accordingly. Our food and food from home must comply with Early Years Nutrition Standards.

Clothing / Uniform We provide protective clothing for the children when they play with messy activities. We encourage children to gain the skills that help them to be independent and look after themselves. These include taking themselves to the toilet and taking off, and putting on, outdoor clothes. Clothing that is easy for them to manage will help them to do this. Branded uniform is available to purchase directly from our office; this is not compulsory.

Policies Our staff can explain our policies and procedures to you. Copies of which are available on our website and a paper version is available upon request.

Our policies help us to make sure that the service we provide is of high quality and that being a member of the setting is an enjoyable and beneficial experience for each child and their parents/carers.

Our staff and parents work together to adopt the policies, and they all have the opportunity to take part in the annual review of the policies. This review helps us to make sure that the policies are enabling our setting to provide a quality service for its members and the local community.

Information we hold about you and your child We have procedures in place for the recording and sharing of information [data] about you and your child that is compliant with the principles of the General Data Protection Regulations (2018) as follows:
The data we collect is:

1. processed fairly, lawfully and in a transparent manner in relation to the data subject [you and your family]
2. collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes and not further processed for other purposes incompatible with those purposes
3. adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary in relation to the purposes for which data is processed
4. accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date
5. kept in a form that permits identification of data subjects [you and your family] for no longer than is necessary for the purposes for which the personal data is processed
6. processed in a way that ensures appropriate security of the personal data including protection against unauthorised or unlawful processing and against accidental loss, destruction or damage, using appropriate technical or organisational measures

When you enrol your child with us, we will provide you with a privacy notice that gives you further details of how we fulfil our obligations regarding your data.

Safeguarding children Our setting has a duty under the law to help safeguard children against suspected or actual harm or neglect. Our employment practices ensure that people looking after children are suitable to fulfil the requirements of their role and help to protect children against the likelihood of abuse in our setting and we have a procedure for managing complaints or allegations against a member of staff.

Our way of working with children and their parents ensures that we are aware of any problems that may emerge and can offer support, including referral to appropriate agencies, when necessary, to help families in difficulty.

Special educational needs To make sure that our provision meets the needs of each individual child, we take account of any special educational needs a child may have. We work to the requirements of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (2015).

Our Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator is Maureen James

The management of our setting Our setting is a charity and as such is managed by a volunteer management committee - whose members are elected by the parents of the children who attend our setting. The elections take place at our Annual General Meeting. The committee make up the registered person with Ofsted and are responsible for:

- managing our finances
- employing and managing our staff
- making sure that we have, and work to, policies that help us to provide a high-quality service
- making sure that we work in partnership with parents

The Annual General Meeting is open to the parents of all the children who attend our setting. It is our shared forum for looking back over the previous year's activities and shaping the coming year's plan.

Fees and funding Fees are payable monthly in advance. Fees must still be paid if children are absent without notice for a short period of time. If your child has be absent over a long period of time, talk to their key worker, manager, Lyndsey Black or business manager. For your child to keep her/his place at our setting, you must pay the fees. If we are not in receipt of nursery education funding for two-, three- and four-year-olds; then fees apply. To maintain funding the child must attend regularly and punctually. The local authority has the power to remove funding if children do not attend regularly and punctually, if funding is withdrawn fees will be payable.

We accept Nursery Education Funding (NEF) for 2, 3 and 4 year olds, as well as 30 hour funding. For children not in receipt of NEF our fees are payable monthly in advance. Fees must still be paid if children are absent. For your child to keep her/his place at our setting, you must pay the fees or complete funding forms and providing any funding codes. Parents and Carers are responsible for ensuring codes are renewed and valid for the term they wish to claim them. We accept payment from Tax Free Childcare, Voucher as well as payment by BACS.

Home Visit and Starting Fee This is charged at the point of being offered a space and provisionally agreeing sessions. An invoice and registration forms will be sent, on completion of registration forms and payment of the invoice, your child's booking and sessions will be confirmed. This is a nonrefundable fee and covers the registration of your child, home visit, your child's name cards and All About Me forms to be completed.

Sustainability Contribution Charge Government funding is intended to deliver 15 or 30 hours of high-quality flexible childcare. It is not intended to cover meals, other consumables, additional hours or services. Therefore, we charge a sustainability contribution fee per funded session. This money is spent on consumables such as snack, outside activity groups, malleable materials, cooking ingredients, yoga and will go towards covering the cost of all other activities and resources we use to support your children in our setting.

Starting at our setting

The first days

We want your child to feel happy and safe with us. To make sure that this is the case, our staff will work with you to decide on how to help your child to settle into the setting. Our policy on the role of the key person and Settling-in is enclosed with this document or is available from Lyndsey Black.

We hope that you and your child enjoy being members of our setting and that you both find taking part in our activities interesting and stimulating. Our staff are always ready and willing to talk with you about your ideas, views or to respond to any questions.

We operate an open-door policy and will always have someone available to help, support and answer any questions you may have.